

REMARKS

In the most recent office action, claims 1, 3 and 24-37 were pending. Claims 1, 3 and 24-31 are allowed. Claims 32-34 and 36-37 are rejected. Claim 35 is objected to.

In response, claim 32 is amended. Accordingly, claims 1, 3 and 24-37 are pending in the application. No new matter is added.

Applicant responds to the comments in the Office Action as follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action states that claims 32-34 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Anscher (U.S. Patent No. 6,000,109). In particular, the Office Action states that Anscher teaches each and every element of the rejected claims. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 32 is amended to recite:

another engagement structure located on the projection or in the cavity and sized and positioned with a symmetry to one of the first or second engagement structures to permit another engagement structure to cooperate with another of the first or second engagement structures to retain the first and second buckle members

together in a clasped condition in a second orientation different from the first.

The limitation recited in claim 32 that another engagement structure is sized and positioned with a symmetry to one of the first or second engagement structures corresponds to a similar limitation recited in allowed claim 1:

a second catch or second latch on an opposing side of the cavity or central arm, respectively, and sized and positioned with a symmetry to the first catch or first latch, respectively to permit an alternate engagement with the corresponding first catch or first latch, such that the socket and plug may be releasably retained together in a second relative orientation different from the first relative orientation.

Applicant respectfully submits that the limitation provided in claim 32 patentably distinguishes claim 32 over Anscher, similarly to claim 1, for example. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Anscher is overcome, and respectfully requests that it be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicant submits that owing to similarity of the limitation added to claim 32 with that of the limitation found in claim

1, that no further search or consideration of new issues need be taken up by the Examiner.

Claims 33-34 and 36-37 ultimately depend upon and further limit claim 32, and should also be allowable. Reconsideration of claims 33-34 and 36-37 is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the finding of allowance for claims 1, 3 and 24-31. Applicant further acknowledges the allowability of claim 35 if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant submits with this response amendments to claim 32, from which claim 35 ultimately depends, and believes claim 35 to be allowable by being dependent upon an allowable base claim. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claim 35.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and earnestly solicits notice to that effect. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned

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attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance
of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,
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